

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Notice of Allowability	09/785,999	UGLOW ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Jennifer M. Dolan	2813
The MAILING DATE of this communication appeals all claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT R of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313	(OR REMAINS) CLOSED in or other appropriate communication is s	n this application. If not included unication will be mailed in due course. THIS
1. This communication is responsive to RCE 11/10/05.	,	•
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are <u>1,4-9 and 33-35</u> .	,	
 Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority ur a) All b) Some* c) None of the: 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority do International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)). * Certified copies not received:	e been received. e been received in Applicatio	n No
Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONN THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.		a reply complying with the requirements
 A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be subm INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which give 		
 CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftspers 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Paper No./Mail Date Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1 each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the state of the property o	son's Patent Drawing Review . s Amendment / Comment or .84(c)) should be written on th	in the Office action of
 DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the depo attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT 	sit of BIOLOGICAL MATE FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIO	ERIAL must be submitted. Note the DLOGICAL MATERIAL.
Attachment(s) 1. ☑ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	5 D Notice of Int	formal Patent Application (PTO-152)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	6. ☐ Interview Su	ummary (PTO-413),
3. ☑ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date 색/৬/৫]; ৬/١٥/٥૨; २/१४/०५ 4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material	Paper No./ Paper No./ 7. ☐ Examiner's 8. ☑ Examiner's 9. ☐ Other	Mail Date Amendment/Comment Statement of Reasons for Allowance
		CAPL WHITEHEAD, JR.) SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800

Application/Control Number: 09/785,999 Page 2

Art Unit: 2813

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 10/11/05 has been entered.

Allowable Subject Matter

- 2. Claims 1, 4-9, and 33-35 are allowed.
- 3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The primary reason for allowance is the specific, closed-form language of step (d) of claim 1, wherein forming the inter-metal dielectric structure consists of the sequential steps of depositing an inorganic dielectric layer directly on a barrier layer; forming a carbon-doped oxide layer directly on and in contact with the inorganic dielectric layer; forming a trench in the carbon-doped oxide layer; and finally forming a via in the inorganic dielectric layer from within the trench. This language specifically requires a lamination of a barrier layer, an inorganic dielectric layer, and a carbon-doped oxide layer (i.e. a partially organic film) with no intervening or additional layers when forming the wiring trench, as well as requiring etching of the trench before etching of the via.

Art Unit: 2813

The prior art of record teaches many of the elements in claim 1, but there is insufficient motivation to combine such elements and arrive at the specifically claimed method steps. For example, US 6,197,696 to Aoi and US 6,413,583 to Moghadan et al. disclose the use of carbondoped silicon oxide as an inter-metal dielectric layer. Aoi further teaches most of the claimed process steps, but only teaches laminations of a barrier film/inorganic film/organic film (modified embodiment 3); a barrier film/carbon-doped oxide film/organic film (embodiment 3), or a structure having a barrier/inorganic film/thin carbon-doped oxide film/inorganic film, where the inorganic films support both the trench and via (embodiment 4). Aoi does not in any way indicate or suggest the claimed layer structure. Since the layer structure set forth in the claims provides the specific advantage of preventing barrier etch-through (and hence the exposure of the underlying wiring film) when etching the carbon-doped oxide layer, and since the specific layer structure is not suggested by the prior art, it is the Examiner's opinion that the specific method steps present in step (d) of claim 1 would not have been obvious or fairly suggested to a person having ordinary skill in the art.

The Examiner further notes that the claim language requires the etching of the trench in the upper, carbon-doped oxide film before the etching of the via in the lower inorganic film. Although trench-first methods of forming a dual-damascene structure are well known in the art (see, for example, US 6,340,435 to Bjorkman et al.), and hence, would normally be considered an obvious modification of the via-first methods in Aoi based on art-recognized suitability of a known-process, the Examiner considers such a modification unobvious in combination with the specifically claimed layer structure. By etching the trench in the carbon-doped oxide first, one can completely isolate the barrier layer, which tends to have a poor etch selectivity with respect

Art Unit: 2813

to the carbon-doped oxide layer, from the c-oxide layer etchants. Since the trench-first method as applied to the claimed structure further prevents etching of the barrier layer and exposure of the underlying metal layer, and since the prior art provides no suggestion that such an advantage might be obtained through a trench-first process, the claimed combination is considered critical and unobvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jennifer M. Dolan whose telephone number is (571) 272-1690. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:30am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Carl W. Whitehead, Jr. can be reached on (571) 272-1702. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Application/Control Number: 09/785,999

Art Unit: 2813

Page 5

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Jennifer M. Dolan Examiner Art Unit 2813

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